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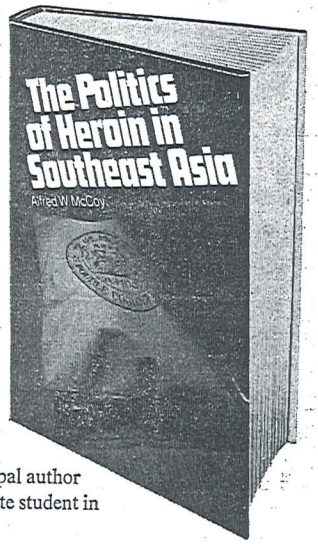
Harper & Row announces publication of "THE POLITICS OF HEROIN IN SOUTHEAST ASIA"



HARPER & ROW is publishing this week a brilliant and controversial study of the international narcotics traffic and the role played in it by agencies of the U.S. Government, including the CIA. The book is THE POLITICS OF HEROIN IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. The principal author is Alfred W. McCoy,* a twenty-seven year old graduate student in history at Yale University.

In early June 1972 Mr. McCoy testified on the general subject matter of his book before the Foreign Operations Subcommittee of the Senate Appropriations Committee (better known as the Proxmire Committee). Shortly thereafter, the CIA asked Harper & Row for an opportunity to read Mr. McCoy's manuscript prior to publication. The CIA stated that:

> **"In the light of the pernicious nature of the drug traffic, allegations concerning involvement of the U.S. Government therein or the participation of American citizens should be made only if based on hard evidence. It is our belief that no reputable publishing house would wish to publish such allegations without being assured that the supporting evidence was valid.*** We believe we could demonstrate to you that a considerable number of Mr. McCoy's claims about this Agency's alleged involvement are totally false and without foundation, a number are distorted beyond recognition, and none is based on convincing evidence."**

We have worked closely with Mr. McCoy in the preparation of the book. We have asked for, and the author has supplied us with, documentation for every material allegation of a controversial nature contained in the work (there are 63 pages of footnotes supporting a text of 383 pages). In addition the book has been read by independent authorities. As a result, we are convinced that the work is carefully reasoned, scholarly, and well documented.

However, in view of the serious nature of the charges made, we believed and still believe the CIA deserved the opportunity to demonstrate to us that certain of Mr. McCoy's statements are "totally false and without foundation." We further believed that they should have this opportunity before the book was published and while there was still time to avoid what could conceivably be irreparable damage to innocent persons.

Accordingly, and with the consent of the author, we made the book available to the CIA under certain agreed conditions. We told them that we would consider any factual inaccuracies which they might wish to point out to us, *but that we and the author would be the sole judges of whether changes would be made.* We made clear that our right to publish could not, and would not, be infringed. The CIA accepted these conditions.

At the end of the stipulated seven-day period the CIA delivered eight pages of written comments on the book. Although no specific factual errors were cited, some of Mr. McCoy's sources were questioned and the veracity of others flatly contradicted. We carefully reviewed these charges with the author, again going over the notes of his various interviews and other source material. Our confidence in the quality of the book was reaffirmed. We concluded that changes were neither necessary nor appropriate. We so informed the CIA, carefully documenting our reasons for not accepting each of the points made by them.

Thus THE POLITICS OF HEROIN IN SOUTHEAST ASIA is being published without a single change. And we have given the CIA a fair opportunity to support their claim that the book is based upon inadequate scholarship. We believe that we have acted responsibly, in the best interests of all concerned, including the American reading public.

Winthrop Knowlton
President
Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc.

*with Cathleen B. Read and Leonard P. Adams II

The Politics of Heroin in Southeast Asia—Illustrated, $10.95 at bookstores